AN Impartial EXAMINATION AND REFUTATION OF THE Erroneous Tenents OF THOMAS MOOR;

In his dangerous Writings, intituled,

CLAVIS AUREA, &c.

Wherein he is not ashamed to insinuate his being the *Elias* mentioned in *Malachi*; denies an Hell, or future Punishment, and boldly asserts the inevitable Salvation of all Men.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

TO THE READER.

Courteous Reader,

NOT doubting but I have expoſed my ſelf to the Cenſure of ſome, for taking notice of ſo inconſiderable a Writer, and endeavouring to refute Errours ſo obvious to the Judgment of every perſon that hath learned but the Alphabet of Chriſtianity, I think my ſelf obliged to prefix the Reaſon of my undertaking this unpleaſant Task. I have been divers times aſſaulted by a particular Friend, of long acquaintance, with theſe pernicious Writings of Thomas Moor; who, having been unhappily ſeduc'd thereby, is grown ſo great an Advocate, as not only with great Zeal to defend, but diſperſe them very induſtriouſly with his own hands in divers parts of the Country: and after ſome endeavours by perſonal Conference to recover him (tho' with too little appearance of ſucceſs) he earneſtly deſired me to make particular Remarks in writing for his and others ſatisfaction; expreſſing at the ſame time a willingneſs to recede, if I or any other perſon could fairly overthrow thoſe defended Principles which he eſteem'd impregnable. Tho' I did not readily, nor the firſt time in any meaſure, comply with his requeſt (having always had an averſion to the Polemical part of Theology, of which, if I miſtake not, the World is too full already); yet upon further thoughts, together with the obſervation of T. M's. inſulting ſtrain, becauſe his Books were never yet anſwered, I did at laſt endeavour it: and becauſe ſome (of better Judgment than my ſelf) have thought my Remarks worthy of publick view, as being adapted to the preſent Atheiſtical Times, I have ſubmitted my own meaner Opinion to theirs in that behalf; and heartily deſire they may, through Divine Bleſſing, in ſome degree anſwer the end for which they are (I hope ſincerely) intended. I have not the vanity to think them ſo correct, as to ſecure me from the laſhes of captious Criticks, there having been ſcarce ten days paſs'd ſince I firſt undertook thus to gratifie my Friends Curioſity; and by reaſon of many avocations I had not leiſure to tranſcribe the blotted Origi-

nal, which may be ſome excuſe for Errata's in Printing. I hope this ſmall Incurſion into the Province of others will not give offence, or be adjudged a breach of Priviledge; as this is the firſt time, ſo 'tis, at leaſt, probable it may be the laſt. When a Foreign Enemy invades our Confines, we excuſe the irregularity if others, beſide the well-diſciplin'd Militia *ſet an helping-hand to oppoſe him; and when the grand Enemy appears moſt audacious to ſtrike at the Safety and Happineſs of Mankind, ſuch Liberty ſeems to be no leſs allowable: Tet I can truly ſay, I had much rather have ſit ſtill, and ſeen ſome other perſon of better capacity engag'd herein. What, with the increaſe of Atheiſm and Immorality (too much conniv'd at heretofore) on the one hand, and an exorbitant Zeal for promoting Parties and Opinions on the other, that the Antient Footſteps of Chriſtian Piety and univerſal Charity have been greatly obſcur'd, and are in no ſmall danger of being totally defac'd, is the ſad experince of Reformed Chriſtendom at this day: And 'twere heartily to be wiſh'd, that all who ſincerely profeſs and agree in the Fundamentals of the ſame Faith, would forget their former and preſent Heats, bitter Invectives and terms of diſtinction (as Deformities unfit to be carried with them into the other World) and every one become emulous of ſetting the firſt ſtep towards an hearty Reconciliation: This ſeems to be the beſt Expedient againſt the deſtructive Wiles of the common Adverſary, and far more honourable than to defend, with a partial Reſolution, the utmoſt extent of their ſeveral fortified Opinions in ſuch things as themſelves own to be either meerly indifferent, or, at moſt, not eſſential to Salvation. But, kind Reader, pardon my boldneſs and prolixity. That the ſame Omnipotent Goodneſs which once diſpos'd the Original Chaos into Order and Harmony, would at laſt effectually interpoſe to heal our manifold Breaches, and eſtabliſh Peace and Truth in our Borders, to the great Happineſs of this and ſucceeding Generations, is the ſincere deſire of*

Your hearty Well-wiſher,

April 10. 1698.

T. C.

A Succinct Refutation

OF THE

Erroneous Tenents of *Thomas Moor*,

In his dangerous Writings, intituled,

Clavis Aurea, Myſtery of Iniquity, &c.

NOT to trouble my ſelf or the Reader with a tedious recitation of, or particular deſcant upon, the many miſcellaneous expreſſions and tautologies in the ſeveral parts of this bold Author's unhappy Writings, I ſhall endeavour impartially, and in as few words as may be, to repreſent the plain ſcope of the whole, and then to make ſome very brief Remarks thereon.

The Marrow therefore (or rather Venom) of theſe no leſs dangerous than uncommon Notions, plainly offers it ſelf under theſe particulars, *viz.*

1. That all mankind (tho' for the moſt part living and dying in an hardened courſe of ſin and unbelief) ſhall be ſaved.

2. That Faith is given after this life to ſuch as die in impenitency and unbelief.

3. That there is no Hell, or future ſtate of eternal puniſhment; but by thoſe terms, ſo often uſed in ſacred Writ, are meant only the troubles of this life.

4. That Man in his primitive Innocency had not, nor now hath, in any meaſure, a free will or choice in himſelf: but that *Adam*'s fall, and the greateſt particular tranſgreſſions ever ſince, were by Divine Predeſtination and compulſion.

5. That the Children of the fleſh (*Rom.* 9. 8.) are all men in the fleſh, whether good or evil; and the Children of Promiſe are the Souls of all men that ever were, are or ſhall be, not one excepted of what Nation or belief ſoever) in their ſeparated or unbodied ſtate.

6. That the *Elijah* propheſied by *Malachy* is yet to come; and that

that the ſaid *T. M.* (though ſomewhat cautious with a ſeeming modeſty) is that very perſon.

7. That this extraordinary Hypotheſis had extraordinary proof of its certainty, *viz.* Divine Revelation; as the Viſion of a fiery tranſparent Globe, a Dove, Comet, *&c.*

To begin with the firſt [—*That all mankind ſhall be ſaved.*—]

This *T. M.* grounds upon (*Rom.* 11. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 32.) and from thence infers, That all the literal Jews, though avowed Enemies to the Goſpel, and dying in unbelief, are notwithſtanding intereſted in God's Electing Love, and conſequently ſaved: Taking this for the clear meaning of that part of St. *Paul*'s Writings, and a Truth impregnable, he proceeds to confirm it by ſeveral Arguments and parallel Scriptures. But becauſe the forementioned Quotation from (*Rom.* 11.) is, and he acknowledges to be, the only hinge or foundation of his Hypotheſis, I ſhall in the firſt place endeavour to touch thereupon. Therefore,

Firſt; The plain ſcope of the Apoſtle in thoſe words, ſeems to be (For I dare not aſſume this bold Aſſertor's infallible ſtrain, than which no greater mark of a Satanical deluſion) That he would re-mind the converted Gentiles, of their former miſerable State whilſt Strangers to the Goſpel, and fix on them the moſt humble ſenſe of the greatneſs of their preſent Priviledges, their own unworthineſs, and the danger of ingratitude, carnal ſecurity, and a careleſs uſing thoſe ineſtimable Talents committed to their charge. And he heightens this ſo neceſſary *Momento* from the tremendous Example of the obſtinate Jews, who by an exorbitant Zeal for, and confidence in the Externals of their Religion, were juſtly left to ſo great Blindneſs, as to reject, oppoſe and crucifie the true Meſſiah (the End and Center of their Typical Worſhip) whom they pretended to wait for. Having a little before ſpent a whole Chapter in vindicating the Divine Juſtice, in theſe great and arduous Points, againſt the bold and groundleſs Cavils of ſuch as would be ready to impeach it, the better to confirm the believing Gentiles in their Title to the Priviledges of the New Covenant; and well knowing the great propenſity of Humane Nature to Pride, Oſtentation, and Carnal Security, he does by divers Metaphors, and ſtrong Arguments, very pathetically endeavour to fortifie them againſt the ſame Stumbling-block, which had been ſo fatal to the other. For though theſe degenerate Branches of faithful *Abraham* had thus ſtubbornly and wilfully excluded themſelves from the fulneſs of their Idoliz'd promiſes; yet the Gentiles

Act. 13. 27.

tiles being ingraffed into the ſame Root or Principle of Faith with the Primitive Jewiſh Anceſtors (who liv'd and dy'd in the true Faith of the Meſſiah) were not to inſult over them, but from their Fall ſhould rather be excited to the greater caution, humility and fruitfulneſs (as before hinted): and the rather, becauſe this rejection of the whole Unbelieving Race of literal *Iſrael*, is not to be eſteemed abſolute; it being very probable that God may hereafter in his due time, and by ſome extraordinary Diſpenſation of his Providence, powerfully convince and convert a remnant of them to the Chriſtian Faith. Nevertheleſs he will not thus own or reſpect them conſidered as literal Jews, but as Goſpel Believers in common with the Gentiles, both together making up the ſpiritual *Iſrael*, the true Univerſal Church peculiarly purchaſed by Chriſt, juſtified ſolely by Faith in him, and ſanctified, governed and preſerved by the happy influence and conduct of the Holy Spirit. For all (*i. e.* both Jews and Gentiles, which include the whole World) having ſinned, and being concluded by God in Unbelief, as to their own natural or moral capacity, are equally made partakers of the ſame rich Mercy and free Grace of God in the Goſpel. This ſeems to be the plain drift of this profound Apoſtle, as well in the forementioned verſes at in the two former chapters, and divers other parallel places of his Epiſtles; and particularly of this to the *Romans*. One while he tells us — He is now a Jew that is one outwardly—; that all, not *Iſrael* that are of *Iſrael*—: at another place, that Circumciſion availeth nothing——; and ——that there is neither Jew nor Greek, *&c.* but all are one in Chriſt Jeſus.

11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. ver.

verſe 32.

Rom. 2.28. ch. 9. v. 6. Gal. 6. 15. ch. 3. v. 28.

Secondly; The beſt and ſafeſt way of expounding this part of St. *Paul's* Writings, is to compare it with the general ſcope of other Scriptures, and eſpecially with the aſſertions of the ſame Apoſtle in his other Epiſtles, who doubtleſs beſt knew his own meaning. If in this, or any other part of his Writings he ever intended to ſuggeſt the certain and inevitable Salvation of all men, or that the Jews dying in Unbelief and Enmity to the Goſpel, are notwithſtanding elected and ſaved; we ſhould not find him in the ſame Epiſtle ſo pathetically lamenting their dreadful condition, as to wiſh himſelf accurſed from Chriſt for their ſakes——; nor giving ſuch cautions not to treaſure up Wrath againſt the day of Wrath, and revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, who will render to every one according to their deeds——; nor would he have uſed holy policy, ſuch condeſcenſion, ſuch unwearied pains, undergone ſuch trials and hardſhips in the ſervice of his great Maſter (much dearer to him than his life,) *viz.* propagating the Goſpel, and eſtabliſhing

Rom. 9. 2, 3. ch. 2. v. 5, 6. Act. 20. 24.

bliſhing its Converts in their holy Faith——; becoming to the weak
1 Cor. 9. 22. as weak,——*&c.* that by all means he might ſave ſome——; earneſtly exhorting them ſo to run as that they might obtain the prize——; and for their greater vigilancy and circumſpection enforcing on them the Example of his own Spiritual Warfare, by which he kept under the relicts of corruption, leſt when he had preached the ſa-
24, 25, 26, 27 verſes. ving Goſpel to others, himſelf ſhould be caſt away——; nor would he have ſpoken of the differing Effects of the ſame unchangeable Word of Life, as being the ſavour of death unto death in them that periſh, and of life unto life in them that believe and embrace
2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. it——: nor yet mentioned any thing of the Goſpel being hid from ſuch as are loſt and judicially blinded by the God of this World—;
2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. nor dehorted the backſliding *Galatians* from thoſe works of the fleſh (particularly mentioned) with a poſitive aſſertion, that all thoſe who commit ſuch things (with allowance and perſeverance) ſhall
Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. not inherit the Kingdom of God——: nor would he have exhorted the Church at *Philippi* not to be terrified by their Adverſaries,
Phil. 1. 28 which was to them an evident token of perdition,—*&c.* nor told them afterwards, with weeping, of ſome that walked contrary to the Goſpel, being Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt, whoſe end is
Phil. 3. 18, 19 deſtruction——: nor would he have comforted the *Theſſalonians* under their ſore troubles and perſecutions with a *Memento* of Chriſt's glorious Coming, to give them perfect reſt, and an entrance into the heavenly Kingdom; as alſo to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Goſpel, *&c.* who ſhall
2 Theſ. 7. 8, 9. be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction,——*&c.* 'Tis needleſs to enumerate the many concurring Teſtimonies of the other Apoſtles, and of our Saviour himſelf in the Records of the Evangeliſts, leſt I ſhould ſeem too tedious in a point ſo clear, that the contrary Aſſertion (as *T. M*'s.) muſt ſtrike at the whole ſcope of Scripture, and ſhew a degree of obduracy beyond compariſon. What
1 Tim. 2. 6. is urged of Chriſt's giving himſelf a Ranſom for all,——*&c.* and
ch. 4. v. 10. being the Saviour of all men, but eſpecially of them that believe,——*&c.* ſhall be conſidered hereafter under the fourth Head.

Thirdly; This Doctrine of Univerſal and Inevitable Salvation, not only ſubverts the many harmonious Teſtimonies of Sacred Writ, but the Dictates of right Reaſon; inaſmuch as it ranks the moſt pertinacious Miſcreants hardened Sinners and inveterate Perſecutors, with the truly pious regenerate and faithful Profeſſors of Chriſtianity. The ſcattered Relicts of Reaſon implanted in Humane Nature, have in all Ages ſuggeſted the puniſhment and reward of Vice

Vice and Vertue, among such as had not the advantage of the Divine Oracles: And some of them, who lived in those dark Times and Places, have been so exemplary in Moral Attainments, (if Humility, Mortification, *&c.* may not deserve an higher Epithete) as to shame the far greater part of Christians, though dignified with more excellent, yea inestimable Priviledges. What can be more absurd than to equal a bloody *Nero*, (living in the height of wickedness against God and Man, as his only Element, and dying wholly void of remorse) with a pious self-denying (I had almost said, Divine) *Seneca*: or St. *Paul*, that great Apostle of the Gentiles, and unwearied Instrument in propagating the Christian Faith, with a malicious apostatizing and persecuting *Julian?* If it be objected, that this Argument centers Man's Salvation in Works, and lessens the Glory of God, who intends only the exaltation of Free Grace: this will be found but a very weak Subterfuge. For, as on the one hand, the beginning, progress and accomplishment of the Blessed work of Salvation in every Soul is wholly supernatural, and none of the concurring faculties of Man's most noble rational part, when truly subjected to Divine Grace, may have the least claim or pretence in the matter of Justification: So, on the other hand, that Faith which doth not work by Love, and incline the Soul to sincere returns of Universal Obedience, or at least desires after it, is but empty, fictitious and unprofitable. The genuine tendency of the New Birth, is to breathe in the heavenly Air. Grace effectually operating will endeavour to return some streams, at least droppings, of Love towards the immense Ocean from whence it came. Though the imperfect Obedience of finite Creatures cannot add to, nor their most obstinate Disobedience detract from the Divine Perfection: yet we may as well imagine that the Scriptures of undoubted truth, are no better than one aggregated fallacy, and design'd for no other use than to amuse the World, as that Mankind shall be saved upon terms differing from, or contradictory to what God himself hath prescribed. If he hath enjoyn'd Faith and Obedience, and made them so essential, that without the former (which also includes the latter) it is impossible to please him: Doubtless there can be no greater indignity offered than to imagine, yea promise, and as it were insure Salvation to all such as stubbornly persist in Unbelief, Disobedience, and open Hostility against both the Author and the Terms of Grace.

Rom. 2. 14, 15, 26, 27.

Rom. 3. 23, 24. Eph. 2. 8, 9.

Heb. 11. 6.

Fourthly; Such a Doctrine tends to the utter subversion of all good Principles and Practices, whether Moral, Legal, or Evange-

lical, and rendring the World as wicked as Satan or corrupt Nature can ſuggeſt. Though it muſt be acknowledged that Evangelical Obedience is, or ought to be grounded on the ennobling Principle of Love, rather than a ſervile fear of Wrath and Damnation: yet ſo great is the Degeneracy of Humane Nature that there is no ſmall need of thoſe terrifying Methods, as preparatory to the ſweet Conſolations of the Goſpel: And, indeed, moſt commonly the work of Regeneration begins with the Terrours of Legal Convictions; which nevertheleſs do often prove abortive, either as they grow remiſs, and ſuffer a backſliding into former ſenſuality, or fix Man upon the ſandy foundation of his own feeble Performances, as the ground of his hope and confidence. But if all Mankind ſhall neceſſarily be ſaved, without any reſpect to their Obedience or Diſobedience, Faith or Unbelief; what need then of all the pains in Preaching, or propagating the ſweet and delectable ſound of the Goſpel; or of the care, ſtudy, zeal, or endeavours about Religion in the World? To what purpoſe did Chriſt leave that clear and poſitive aſſertion, That *except a man be born again he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God* —— ? or enjoyn us to enter in at the ſtrait Gate, *&c.* or tell us, that *wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leads to deſtruction, and many there be that go in thereat* —— ? What need of *ſeeking firſt the Kingdom of God and the Righteouſneſs thereof* —— ? of *becoming new Creatures* —— ? or of *growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt* —— ? How greedily would the practical Atheiſt, (*i. e.* every profane diſſolute and licentious perſon (catch at ſuch a Doctrine, had he not a ſecret Remembrancer in his own boſom that deals more faithfully with him when ſuffered to ſpeak; and ſometimes without leave! To ſuch *T. M*'s. Notions would be the moſt welcome they ever met with, if they could but arrive at the ſame pitch of certainty as to their future Happineſs, and ſo take firſt a full carouſe in the ſweets of this World, (as they erroneouſly eſteem the height of wickedneſs and ſenſuality) and afterwards poſſeſs the unthought of Joys of the World to come. May the laudable and united Endeavours of Superiours at this time prove effectual to the ſuppreſſing both of ſpeculative and practical Atheiſm, blaſphemous Libels, and fundamental Errours, ſo audaciouſly propagated of late Years, to the great ſhame and detriment of Reformed Chriſtianity.

John 3. 3.
Mat. 7. 13.
Mat. 6. 33.
2 Cor. 5. 17.
2 Pet. 3. 18.

The ſecond Head to be examined is,

That Faith is given after this Life to ſuch as dye in Unbelief.

This

This is but a ſuperſtructure upon the ſame Foundation. For if all Men are neceſſarily ſaved; if Faith be eſſential to Salvation; and if a great part of literal *Iſrael*, and many others dye in Unbelief, then Faith muſt be given after this Life. This is *T. M*'s. own way of arguing. *Clav. Aurea. p. 9.* But that this is no leſs abſurd and contradictory to the ſcope of the holy Scriptures, will eaſily appear. For,

Firſt; The ſhort and uncertain Life of Man in this World, is, and ought to be eſteemed the only time of probation in order to his future ſtate. And indeed 'tis no ſmall favour, to have ſuch a gracious Reprieve from the Sentence of Eternal Death due to *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion: To have the Tree of Life, though forfeited, freely exhibited again, and the former loſs in the firſt *Adam* recovered with unſpeakable advantage in the ſecond, by all that through Faith lay hold on him. That this Life is the only ſeaſon of Grace, is evident from the five rejected Virgins in that well known Parable of Chriſt, who had ſlipt the proper time for furniſhing their Lamps, and ſecurely deferr'd it till the Bridegroom's Coming: alſo from his ſeaſonable Caution to the Unbelieving Jews — to walk while they had the Light —; together Joh. 12. 35.
with his aſſertion to the ſame obſtinate Jews, dying in their ſins—; Joh. 8. 21.
Whither I go ye cannot come——. As Death leaves, Judgment finds us: For if there had been any middle ſtate of probation, doubtleſs the Apoſtle *Paul* would not have been altogether ſilent in this caſe, when he tells us, *'Tis appointed for all men once to dye, but after this the Judgment*——. And if St. *Peter* had thought the Heb. 9. 27.
work of Faith and Repentance ſo indifferent in this Life, or attainable in another, 'tis ſcarce probable he would have preſſed it ſo earneſtly in his Advice to the ſcattered Saints—— to uſe all diligence that they might make their Calling and Election ſure——. *Solomon* adviſes to an induſtrious improvement of the 2 Pet. 1. 10.
preſent time, becauſe *there is no knowledge nor wiſdom in the grave whither we are all haſtening*——. The good King *Hezekiah* in his Eccl. 9. 10.
thankful acknowledgments to God after a ſignal Reprieve from the Jaws of Death (and we may ſuppoſe him to have had as right apprehenſions of that dark and ſilent ſtate, as any Man) utters theſe expreſſions——*The grave cannot praiſe thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy Truth*—. Iſa. 38. 18,
What can be underſtood by that Scripture Metaphor——*as the* 19.
Tree falls, ſo it ſhall lye, whether, —&c. but that this Life is the only acceptable time, the only day of Salvation——, and if once 2 Cor. 6. 2.
paſs'd, is irrecoverable for ever; and that death when ever it

ſtrips us of theſe Tabernacles, will fix our Souls in an unchangeable ſtate, either of Happineſs or Miſery, according to the bent of our hearts and lives in this World? And notwithſtanding *T. M*'s. ſophiſtical Inference and confident Concluſions, I heartily wiſh that neither he, nor any others, may neglect the great and eſſential work of Faith, whilſt converſant in the paths of time; leſt a future remembrance of the preſent opportunity prove an aggravation of Torment, when all hope and comfort ſhall be cut off for ever.

Secondly; 'Tis very abſurd to imagine that Faith ſhall be given to Souls already poſſeſſed of an eternal ſtate, ſince this imperfect ſtate of Mortality is the only proper time for the exerciſe of it. Faith is indeed the moſt pretious Jewel to poor bewildred Mortals on this ſide *Jordan*. Hereby they may ſometimes (like *Moſes* from the top of *Piſgah*) get a glimpſe of the promiſed *Canaan* for their preſent conſolation and ſupport, whilſt ſojourning inthe Tents of *Kedar*——. But when they are once ſafely arriv'd on the other ſide, and have reach'd the ſweet Air of the upper Regions, leaving behind all the filthy Garments and heavy cloggs of corruption, Faith, which was before ſo valuable, becomes ſwallowed up in fruition; and they will no more need or make uſe of it, than a Man reſtor'd to perfect ſtrength will the Crutches with which he was formerly ſupported in an accidental Lameneſs. And for ſuch as dye wholly without Faith, what middle ſtate ſhall we imagine them to be lodg'd in, that can capacitate them for the exerciſe of this eſſential Grace? Since the Scriptures mention but two Receptacles for the ſpirits of all Men, when diſlodg'd from their earthly Priſons; *viz.* the eternal boſom of Divine Love, where Faith ceaſes, as having attain'd its end; and the Society of accurſed Angelical Spirits, where Faith, if preſent, could not be leſs unſuitable? Therefore, waving further Arguments in ſo clear a caſe, I proceed to conſider the third Aſſertion, of the ſame blaſphemous ſtrain, often repeated in the ſeveral Writings of the ſaid *T. M. viz.*

Pſalm.

That there is no Hell or future ſtate of Eternal Puniſhment; but by thoſe terms we are to underſtand only the troubles of this Life.

It ſeems needleſs to enumerate the many undeniable Teſtimonies in holy Writ, for clearing the certainty of a future eternal Puniſhment: Since nothing can be more plain, though *T. M.* is not afraid to ſmooth over with inconſiſtent Gloſſes ſome of the

the moſt Remarkable; as the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus* and of the Goats on the left Hand Sentenced to everlaſting Puniſhment; together with the Form of that dreadful Sentence, —— *Depart from me ye Curſed into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*: —— The Advice to Pluck a right Eye, *&c.* rather than to have the whole Man caſt into Hell Fire, where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched: —— The Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, mentioned in the *Apocalypſe*, into which all whoſe Names are not written in the Book of Life ſhall be caſt, *&c.* —— All which, he will have to be no more than Bugbears to frighten the World, or at moſt but figurative Expreſſions to ſignifie the Troubles of this Life. His ſuggeſting a Double Eternity [or everlaſting] *Clav. Aur.* p. 12. one during the Continuance of the Body on Earth, and the other hereafter in the unbodied State; is ſo ridiculous, as alſo his Application, that it needs no Anſwer. Without running into nice Diſputes about the Locality of Hell, or the Kind of Fire, *&c.* (which are at beſt, but oppoſing Humane Reaſon to Divine Wiſdom and Authority, and a very dangerous Step towards Atheiſm.) It is moſt certain, from the whole Scope and Harmony of the ſacred Records both of all the old and new Teſtament, that there is a real, not imaginary Hell, or State of eternal Puniſhment allotted to all obſtinate and finally impenitent Sinners: And whether we ought to eſteem the Scriptures of unqueſtionable Verity, a Cheat, and Chriſt himſelf (who is the Way, the Truth and the Life) an Impoſtor, or *T. M.* is not difficult to Determine. But, Luke 16. Mal. 25. *ult.* verſe 41. Joh. 14. 6.

Firſt, If there be no other Hell than the Troubles of this Life, Then the moſt eminent Servants of God, have generally been the greateſt Objects of his Wrath, and many of the moſt hardened Sinners felt little or nothing of it. What do we find more frequent, than that the beſt of Gods Children have been moſt ſorely exerciſed with Afflictions in this Life, and yet out of a gracious End, and as a Badge of his Paternal Love——, to Purge away their Droſs, that they may come forth as tryed Gold —— and be better fitted for the higheſt Manifeſtations of his Grace and Favour: whilſt others who make choice of their good things in this Life have been ſuffered to go on in an uninterrupted Courſe of ſenſual Pleaſures without any remarkable Check, Croſſes or Calamities to the Period of their Lives? Something of this Nature the Royal Pſalmiſt obſerved; and records as a ſtumbling Block to him for a time, *When* Heb. 12. 6, 7. Rev. 3. 19.

he

he beheld their Eyes ſtanding out with Fatneſs ——; *That they were not in Trouble*, &c. *but had more than their Hearts could Wiſh, whilſt he was plagued all the Day long, and chaſtened every Morning*: But when he went into the Sanctuary, and there Recognized his Intereſt in God, he knew the Reaſon of theſe differing Diſpenſations; that the former had but a miſerable Portion, and that his, though attended with the Croſs, was far more Elegible: Therefore in the Concluſion, he Addreſſes himſelf to God.—— *Nevertheleſs I am continually with thee, thou haſt upholden me by my right Hand; thou ſhalt Lead me by thy Counſel, and afterwards Receive me to Glory*——. 'Tis moſt certain, that the Sufferings of this Life in the higheſt Degree which Chriſtians can Experience, are not worthy to be compared with their future Glory——; and therefore they have Cauſe to bleſs God inſtead of Murmuring or Repining: Yet, to Imagine that ſuch ſhall be Coheirs of the ſame eternal Happineſs, who not only enjoy the Quietneſs of this World's imaginary Pleaſures, but Live and Die in an unregenerate Courſe, wholly void both of reſtraining and ſanctifying Grace, is to make them the ſpecial Favourites of God; and does much more derogate from divine Goodneſs and Purity, than to Believe that he will Inflict infinite Puniſhment for finite Sins; for the latter is not only warranted in and by the Scriptures, but 'tis agreeable to right Reaſon; That the abſolute Soveraign and Creator of all things, ſhould Impoſe ſuch Laws upon his Creatures either as to Rewards or Puniſhments, as ſeem beſt to his own unſearchable Wiſdom and Pleaſure. Such Fooliſh and Atheiſtical Arguings as ſeem to Impeach, Limit or Direct the Supream Being, are briefly yet ſufficiently Refuted by the Apoſtle *Paul*, and may be ranked with that dangerous Philoſophy and vain Deceit, againſt which he gives a ſeaſonable Caution.

Pſalm 73. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. 14, 15, 23, 24.

Rom. 8.18.

Rom. 9. 20, 21.

2 Col. 2. 8.

Secondly, Next to an impartial Search into the Divine Oracles, (too much neglected and no leſs perverted) I would wiſh *T. M.* and every other Perſon, that does but ſo much as Heſitate at the Belief of a future Puniſhment, to make it their Buſineſs to Converſe with ſuch dying Perſons, as have been moſt negligent in the great Concerns of another Life; and eſpecially with the moſt bold and daring Atheiſts, (who turn all Religion into Ridicule, and by a kind of Infernal Philoſophy which their grand Maſter is always ready to furniſh them with, appear as Champions not for, but againſt the Truth; whilſt the feeble *Nexus* of Health, or uninterrupted Union between

tween Soul and Body laſts, and they can Swim in temporal Pleaſures:) Such heſitating Perſon or Perſons may then, if not Caſe-hardened, chance to meet with ſome more effectual Convictions, than whilſt they are partially Buſied in defending their own erroneous Notions. When the dark Shades of Death appear, and the Soul apprehending the nearneſs of its inevitable Separation, hath the cleareſt Idea's of things, and can no longer be cajol'd into a ſervile Compliance with the Organs of Senſe, then is the fitteſt time to mark its Apprehenſions of a future State. As ſome have anticipated the Joys of Heaven, and been ſo brim-full at the Soul's taking its flight from this earthly Priſon, that they could ſcarce contain it: So, many others who in the Series of their Lives have ſeemed wholly void both of the Fear and Belief of a future Hell, have had ſuch plentiful foretaſts of it in their own Breaſts, and ſo powerfully preached them to others, as was ſufficient to have overcome the moſt Stoical Apathy in any Spectator. How have they then Confuted their own former Principles and Practice with the moſt paſſionate Clamours, the bittereſt Reflections, and the evident Tokens of Intollerable Torments! What would they not then give for a little Reſpite, to Convince the World as well by Practice as Words of their former Miſtake! What a diſmal thing muſt it needs be with ſuch inexpreſſible Horrour, and as it were, the Beginnings of Hell, to Lanch forth into the Ocean of Eternity! Then there will be a certain, but a terble Conviction of all thoſe, who now either profeſſedly or practically diſregard a future Puniſhment, though they may at preſent ſeem ſo Confirmed in their Stupidity, as not only to Reject *Moſes* and the Prophets, &c. but if poſſible, a Meſſenger from the Dead.

The next Erroneous Aſſertion to be Examined, is,

Fourthly, *That Man in his Primitive Innocency hath not, nor now hath, in any meaſure a free Will or Choice in himſelf: But that* Adam's *Fall and the greateſt particular Tranſgreſſions ever ſince were by Divine Predeſtination and Compulſion.*

That our firſt Parents in their primitive State of Paradifical Innocency, were endowed with a freedom of Will or Choice, in reſpect to their Obedience or Diſobedience to the Divine Commands; and though not abſolutely free Agents becauſe under the Limitation of a righteous Law, (not impoſſible to be performed) were

were in no wise constrain'd to Violate or Infringe it, without their own voluntary Deviation; and that God, the Fountain of all Grace and Goodness, though in his unsearchable Wisdom and eternal Foresight, permitting and providing an Expiation for Sin, neither was, nor could be in any respect the efficient or impulsive Cause thereof, is very agreeable to the Scope of the holy Scriptures, and the sense of the antient Christians. But this Doctrine it seems is strange to *T.M.* who tells us in his *Myst. of Iniq. p.* 24. That he cannot imagine or believe that God could certainly foresee *Adam*'s Fall, if an equal power was given him to stand or fall; and the reason he gives, is because he [*viz. T. M.*] cannot plant in his Mind any Idea of the way and manner of such foresight. Doubtless they who will attempt to measure out Infinite Wisdom, Knowledge, Power, or any other of the Divine Attributes by the narrow limits of depraved Reason, had better never meddle with things of so sublime a nature. And indeed 'tis much more safe and commendable, not only for such, but for all persons, to avoid prying too curiously into the unsearchable depths of the Divine Counsels, the Eternal Essence, Purposes and Decrees of the incomprehensible Trinity, as also their wonderful manifestations in time in the mysterious work of Creation and Redemption; whereby 'tis so easie for frail Man, whilst blinded with the thick foggs of these lower Regions, and especially without great caution and humility, to run into a Labyrinth of Errour, and just that God should suffer him so to do. Without soaring so high after speculative Knowledge, we have sufficient ground for admiration and praise, whilst we consider That the Tree of Life is not wholly lost; that God hath not left Mankind in this miserable estate, altogether destitute of help and hope; that he who was the *first born* of every Creature, *the corner stone*—, the beginning of the Greation of God—, by and for whom all things were made—, is also the Restorer of the fallen state of Mankind; that he is indifferently exhibited to all (both Jews and Gentiles) as the free Gift of Divine Love, and not only invites every Soul that is weary and heavy laden to come unto him for Rest, but is both able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him. In a large acceptatien he is the Saviour of all Men, by purchasing that gracious and general Reprieve before hinted at, and not only upholding the sinful State of this World, but exhibiting the Terms of Salvation indifferently unto all Mankind, and setting them, as it were, once more upon their own Feet, in a way of temporary Probation: And to all those, who from the sinful Life of fallen Nature, attain not only to the restored Life of Reason, but become united to him by Faith and Love (which

Aug. lib. 1. de Orig. anime, cap. 4. Ambros. lib. 1. de vocat. Gent. cap. 1.

Col. 1. 15. Eph. 2. 20. Rev. 3. 14. Col. 1 16. John 1. 3. Rom. 5. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. Mat. 11 28.

(which neceſſarily include Obedience) he is an effectual Saviour. Thus far all agree: But then what unhappy Controverſies have enſued, about the extent of the humane Power and Capacity, in moving towards embracing or improving the Means of Grace thus freely offered. And whilſt ſome are ready to center all in the ſtrength of Man's natural Will, and ſo to make him a compleat αὐτόματον, both as to the firſt reception and progreſſive Acts of Faith: *T. M.* with an unparallel'd boldneſs runs into the contrary Extream, and would have him but a meer Machine, wholly deſtitute of Will, Power, Choice, *&c.* or at leaſt of the voluntary Exerciſe of all thoſe ennobling Endowments (tho' rectified by, and made ſubſervient to a ſupernatural Principle of Divine Grace) and in all his Efforts towards good or evil, acted meerly by Compulſion and fatal Neceſſity.

He affirms [*Myſt. of Iniq.* p. 30.] —— *Judas* inevitably betrayed Chriſt, and deſtroyed himſelf——: And [*ibid.*] —— Men are predeſtinated and compelled to die in Unbelief, before they are born ——; And—Blaſphemies, Murthers, *&c.* are compelled on Men —[Addit. to *Clav. Aurea.* p. 21.] When the grand Enemy of Mankind can no longer hold the World in Atheiſm and open Hoſtility againſt the exhibited Means of Salvation, he will not ſtick to put on a more plauſible diſguiſe, but like an Angel of Light transforms himſelf into any ſhape, that he may, if poſſible, carry on his own Work with equal Succeſs: And no wonder if he drive unwary and aſpiring Man, whilſt reſting in his own Wiſdom, into many dangerous Deluſions. What need is there of ſoaring ſo high into the Arcana of Heaven, or to ravel the Divine Councils for Predeſtination, *&c.* ſince all things eſſential to Faith and Practice are made plain, and by a wonderful Condeſcention, ſuited to the meaneſt Capacity; if Man will but firſt lay aſide that over-wiſe Serpentine Subtilty, which is the proper effect of the forbidden Fruit, and with a genuine Sincerity ſubmit to the Divine Teachings? The former is that infernal Wiſdom, branded by St. *James* with the Epithetes of ſenſual and develiſh; which always either wholly rejected or perverted the true Simplicity of the Goſpel, and tends to nothing but Strife, Diſcord and Confuſion: The latter is of an higher and more noble Extract, takes the Word of God upon its own Authority, ſilences all Carnal Reaſonings, compares the more abſtruſe Part with what is more plain, and always tends to Union, Love and Harmony. James 3. 15. 1 Cor. 1. 19, 20, 21.

As to what *T. M.* ſo often blaſphemouſly urges of God's being the Author or poſitive Cauſe of all and every particular ſin, *&c.* ſo many far more Learned Pens, having ſufficiently cleared that

Point and ſolv'd all *T. M*'s Objections, which he deduces from Scripture (as the hardning of *Pharaoh*, &c.) to touch thereupon ſeems but *actum agere*, and therefore rather to be omitted in ſo brief a Diſcourſe as this. That the Omnipotent Creator could have anticipated Mans Fall, and endow'd him with an unchangeable Perfection, never liable to fall or be corrupted, is paſt all Queſtion; but that it pleaſed the unſearchable Wiſdom of the Supream Being, to place him in a mutable Station, pronouncing Happineſs or Miſery upon ſuch and ſuch Conditions, and certainly foreſeeing his voluntary Deviation to provide an All-ſufficient *Medium*, for his recovery (thereby centring the whole Work of Salvation in the Riches of Free-Grace, by and through a Redeemer) ſhould lead us to the higheſt Returns of Love and Gratitude that we are capable of, and not into Critical, much leſs Senſorious Animadverſions. What the Fall of Angels was, what the Cauſe thereof, and why Irreparable; as alſo by what means the bleſſed Ones were ſuſtained, are Points almoſt too lofty to meddle with, eſpecially ſince not very material to the preſent purpoſe. Though the Eternal Fountain and Primary Cauſe of all things muſt be ſuppoſed to have perfectly foreſeen, as it were, *uno intuitu*, all particular Motions and Events before the birth of Time; it will not thence follow, that he muſt be the efficient or enforcing Cauſe of Sin. He is indeed after a ſort, the *Cauſa ſine quâ non*; for without him, Angels and Men had never had a Being, and conſequently never ſinn'd: Yet this can in no wiſe make him the poſitive Cauſe. Sin is a *Non-entity* (at leaſt till committed) a privation, defect, diſorder, or preternatural State of rational Beings; as might be illuſtrated from many plain and familiar Compariſons. 'Tis ſometimes repreſented by Darkneſs; and what poſitive Cauſe is there of that? When the Sun recedes from our Hemiſphere, the Night and Darkneſs enſue; and muſt the Sun therefore be the Cauſe of Darkneſs? The Supream Being having no Law but his immenſe Perfections, can no more ſwerve from his own rectitude than ceaſe to be. That there is an admirable Connexion in the whole Courſe of his Providence, not inconſiſtent with the Creatures Liberty, yet ſtill harmoniouſly accompliſhing his immutable Decrees: That all kinds of *ataxy quoad hominem*, proceed from the Free-Actings of the Humane Will, yet by Divine Permiſſion: That God forces not the Will in Converſion, but by a ſupernatural Work graciouſly inclines it; yet neither forces nor inclines the Heart in any meaſure to ſin, but only leaves it to that corrupt Frame and thoſe vicious Habits wherein 'tis ſettled: And that there is an excellent agreement between the Primary and all ſecond

Cauſes,

Cauſes, to the glory of the Divine Juſtice, as well as the unſearchable Riches of Free Grace, hath been ſo amply and learnedly Diſcuſs'd by others, that to inſiſt further thereupon would ſavour highly of Oſtentation.

From our Saviour's Parable of the Talents, and an impartial comparing of many other parallel Scriptures, 'tis moſt evident that God's expectations of obediential Returns from every Man, are proportioned to the meaſure of Grace which he gives; and that the faithful Improvement of that meaſure, is not only accepted by him, but attended with greater enlargements from his inexhauſtible Fulneſs: Whereas the neglect or miſ-improvement of that meaſure, though never ſo ſmall, (as in the caſe of the ſingle Talent) cauſes the open hand of Divine Bounty to be withdrawn, all gracious Experiences to wither and vaniſh, and gradually leaves the Soul to an obdurate *Frame*, under the juſt Sentence of Condemnation. Man therefore, in reſpect to his own Happineſs or Miſery, either Temporal or Eternal, is not ſo much a Machine or meerly paſſive, as *T. M.* would inſinuate; nor is he in any wiſe compell'd to make this or that choice. For though he hath not a natural ſtrength or capacity to find out, chooſe and perſevere in the narrow path that leads to Eternal Life; yet he hath a Talent ſupernatural, a common Gift or meaſure of Grace freely beſtowed on him, as an Univerſal Benefit, accruing by and from the ſecond *Adam*; which ſo far as he reſigns or ſubjects to his ſenſual part, he wilfully ſhuts the Door of Salvation upon himſelf: But if he faithfully improve this ſingle Talent, by denying his ſenſual Luſts and the dictates of depraved Reaſon, and becomes ſincerely reſign'd to the Divine Conduct; then to him that thus hath (*i. e.* rightly uſeth) more ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance; like a Branch abiding in the true Vine, he ſhall be always fruitful, through ſpiritual Vertue convey'd from that Eternal Root; and thus growing from ſtrength to ſtrength, ſhall at laſt (as the Royal Prophet ſaith) appear before God in *Zion*. That the tenders of Divine Grace, which are univerſally extenſive, do not prove univerſally effectual, muſt be imputed to the perverſneſs of Mans Heart, which obſtinately oppoſes the way of Life and Happineſs, and reſting in that ſerpentine Wiſdom, before hinted, forms to himſelf ſome vain and deluſive Ideas inſtead thereof; ſo that (as the Prophet poſitively affirms in the caſe of rebellious *Iſrael*) his deſtruction is only of and from himſelf.

Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib 7. c. 30. Anſelm de concord. grat. & liberi arbitrii.

Mat. 25. 29.

Auguſtin. de corrupt. & grat. c. 14. Id. Enchirid. ad Laurent. cap. 103

Hoſ. 13. 9.

If *T. M.* thinks I put too great Streſs upon the Parable of the Talents, becauſe 'twas but a Parable and not a Reality (as he al-

ledges in divers Places against the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*; of the Sheep and the Goats, *&c.*) He may remember, that 'twas our Saviours delight to exhibit in Parables the greatest Mysteries of his Kingdom, yet not leaving those familiar Comparisons so obscure, but that the meanest Capacity might apprehend his gracious Design therein; for we scarce read of any that stumbled at them, but the over-wise and self-confident, to whose lofty expectations indeed they were not so well adapted; nor may we any more imagine, that he did or would thereby impose destructive Fallacies upon lost Mankind whom he came to save, than joyn with the obstinate Pharisees in censuring him for an Impostor, Blasphemer, or possess'd with an Evil-Spirit. The sweetness of his Deportment and Condescention in explaining, inculcating and applying what he delivered, did sufficiently evince that his Parables were of great weight, that he had no design thereby to amuse or deceive his Auditors; but on the contrary, that believing they might have Life through him. But the next thing in *T. M*'s new Systeme of Divinity is,

Joh. 5. 40. cap. 7. 37. cap. 10. 9.

Fifthly; *That the Children of the Flesh* (Rom. 9. 8.) *are all Men in the Flesh, whether good or evil; and the Children of the Promise are the Souls of all Men that ever were, are, or shall be* (*not one excepted of what Nation or Belief soever*) *in their separated or unbodied State.*

This is indeed agreeable with his Doctrine of universal inevitable Salvation, and equally true. That the Apostle *Paul* in this and many other concurring Places intended to distinguish two kinds of Persons, as vastly differing in their Principles, Practices and Ends, as light and darkness, is evident beyond all reasonable exception. How often do we find him using *Ismael* (*Abraham*'s Son by the Bondwoman) as a Type of the unregenerate part of Mankind; and *Isaac* the promised Heir, as a lively Representative of all those who truly lay hold on the Promises of God by Faith, whether under the Legal or Evangelical Dispensation (the Object of Faith being still the same, *viz.* the *Messiah*!) And that he limits the true *Israel* or Seed of Promise to the latter, *i. e.* the faithful and obedient Servants of God, and not to the Lineage of *Abraham* descending from him in *Isaac* by natural Generation; is also clear from the scope of the foregoing Verses. When he had first testified his unparallel'd Sorrow for the obstinate Blindness of the literal *Israel*, reckoned up those transcendent Priviledges wherewith they were dignified beyond all other Nations, and shewed their Priority of Right to the Gospel; he tells us, That the

Word

Word of God hath not been altogether ineffectual, though for the most part, rejected by these natural Branches; and adds a Reason— *For all are not* Israel *that are of* Israel: *neither because the Seed of* Abraham *are they his Children; but in* Isaac *shall thy Seed be called*—: And lest any should think he meant only the literal Off-spring of *Isaac*, he explains himself further —— That is, *they who are the Children of the Flesh are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promise.*—— &c. If *Isaac* therefore (once intentionally Sacrificed, and in whom all the Nations of the Earth were to be Blessed) be considered as a Type of the *Messiah*, the spiritual *Israel* will appear to be all those who are truly obedient to the Faith of the Gospel; and the Children of the Flesh all those (whether Jews or Gentiles) who either remain in the gross Pollutions of unsanctified Nature, or exalt the imperfect typical Righteousness of the Law in opposition to Christ the end thereof. Thus much seems plainly imported in the Apostles result —— *The Gentles have attained to the Righteousness of Faith*—; *but* Israel *hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness*—; *because they sought it not by Faith, but by the works of the Law*——; which he further clears— *For Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth.* The same learned Apostle in his Epistle to the *Galatians* (who were ready to look back from the ennobling Principle of Faith, to the sandy Foundation of the Law) more largely illustrates this Point in several Chapters, and after a very copious distinction between the fleshly and spiritual Seed, lays down this comfortable Conclusion. —— *If ye be Christ's then are ye* Abraham's *Seed and Heirs according to promise.* But let us consider a little how this agrees with *T. M's.* Sophistical Invention [Second Addition to *Clav. Aur.* pag. 29.]—That all Men are damn'd or lost in the Flesh, and all Men are saved in the Spirit.—— And [*Clav. Aur.* p. 10]——The Children of the Flesh are all Men in the Flesh, Good or Evil; and — *&c.* as before recited. The Apostle *Paul* doth not say, We are now the Children of the Flesh, but in the other World we shall be the Children and Heirs of Promise: Nor doth Christ tell the obstinate and unbelieving Jews, whom he pronounces Children of the Devil, that they should hereafter be the Heirs of Promise; but declares positively, that whither he went they could not come: Neither doth St. *John* say, —We shall hereafter, *&c.* but— Beloved, *now are we the Sons of God*, now, in this present State of imperfection, whilst we are clogged with the relicts of Sin; tho' as born of God, we sin not [*i.e.* not by choice and approbation; not by habitual Subjection, nor by Guilt's imputation:] and tho' we have this assurance

verse 6. verse 7. verses 30, 31, 32. cap. 10. v. 4. Gal. 3. 29. cap. 4. 28. Joh. 8. 44. 1 Joh. 3. 2. cap. 1. v 8. cap. 5. v. 18.

surance of being now the adopted Children of God (in distinction
Verse 19. from the unregenerate World, which lies in Wickedness, *i. e.* habitually enslaved to Satan the wicked One) yet we have higher enjoyments in reversion than our present minority is capable of, knowing that when he (who is our Life, our Head, *&c.*) shall appear, we shall be like him. The next thing to be examined is,

Sixthly; *That* Elijah, *propheſied by* Malachi, *is yet to come; and that* T. M. (*though in ſome places ſeemingly modeſt and cautious*) *is that very perſon.*

Isa. 40. 3, 4 That the *Elias* or Harbinger foretold by *Isaiah*, agrees with this of *Malachi*, and was, at leaſt, partly fulfill'd by the Coming and Miniſtry of *John Baptiſt*, is paſt all contradiction; ſince no leſs than Chriſt
Mar. 11. 7, himſelf plainly decides it in the affirmative—; *This is that* Elias *which*
8. to the *was to come* (having before ſpoken of *John*): and afterwards— *Elias*
15 v. *is come already*—. But whether there may not be a ſecond Coming
ch. 17. v. 12. of *Elias* to forewarn and prepare the ſtupid World for Chriſt's ſecond Coming (becauſe *Malachi* deſcribes a very terrible day ſucce-
Mal. 4. 1, 2. daneous to *Elijah*'s coming, wherein the wicked ſhould be conſum-
3, 5. ed,) I dare not determine; having never pretended to Criticiſm,
Rev. 14. 6. much leſs Infallibility, in what is left obſcure. But ſuppoſing a certainty of that (which very learned men have thought probable) I think I may very ſafely conclude that *T. M.* cannot be the perſon; and that for ſeveral Reaſons.

Firſt; Becauſe it muſt be ſuppoſed that the Teſtimony of this eminent Prophet (*viz. Elijah* or *Elias*) will be conſonant to, or at leaſt conſiſtent with *Malachi*'s Prophecy, which hath a ſpecial reſpect to, and ſeems as it were calculated for the time of his manifeſtation. Now *Malachi* ſpeaks of a remarkable deciſion between the righteous and the wicked, and of their ſeveral rewards as different as their Principles—; that Chriſt the Meſſenger of the Covenant ſhould come ſuddenly to his Temple, and that the former ſhould then be owned
Mal. 3. 1, 2, and valued by him as his Jewels—; that all Nations ſhould call them
3, 4, 16, 17, bleſſed—; that the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhould ariſe unto them with
18. healing under his wings—: But the latter, *i. e.* the wicked, ſhould be
ver. 12th. trodden down as Aſhes under their feet, and conſumed like Stubble
ch. 4. v. 2. in that day which ſhould burn as an Oven—; and then it follows,
ch. 4. v. 1, 3. that *Elijah* the Prophet ſhall be ſent before this great and dreadful
verſe 5. day of the Lord. — But *T. M.* ranks the wicked and the righteous together, as to their future reward, thereby contradicting the ſcope of *Malachi*, and conſequently cannot be the Prophet intended by him.

Secondly, Becauſe, when Scripture Prophecies have a double accompliſhment, there is uſually ſome Harmony or Proportion between

tween the ſeveral times, as alſo, the ſcope, nature and manner of their reſpective conſummation. Thus there are many Prophecies that directly, or as it were, ſpecifically refer to the return of the two Tribes and half from their ſeventy Years Captivity, and the rebuilding of the Temple; which alſo, tho' more remotely, point at the flouriſhing State of Chriſt's Kingdom, when he ſhall (as *Malachi* ſaith) come to his Temple, *i. e.* collective Body of his Saints. Now this twofold accompliſhment doth thus far harmonize; in the former there was an eminent Reformation, a careful peruſing the Records of the Law, and a reeſtabliſhing the purity of Gods worſhip, under the happy conduct of *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, &c. And in the latter there will be a perfection of Holineſs, beyond all preſent Compariſons. Likewiſe, if a double accompliſhment be aſſign'd to this Prophecy of *Elijah*'s coming, *viz.* *John* the forerunner of Chriſt in his Incarnation, and ſome other eminent Meſſenger to precede his ſecond glorious Coming; *John*'s Miniſtry we know ſtrictly enjoyned Repentance as eſſential to Salvation, branding thoſe he judged moſt refractory for a generation of Vipers, and ſo cloſely laid the Ax to the Root, that he denounces Deſtruction to all that did not bring forth good Fruit— ; nor may we ſuppoſe that a ſecond *Elias* will be more remiſs, or not enjoyn Repentance and Faith, as eſſential Qualifications to meet Chriſt at his next coming. But *T. M.* ſuggeſting a certainty of Salvation to all that live and die in Impenitency and Unbelief, ſeems of all Men that ever yet appear'd upon the Stage of this World, the moſt unqualified to be that Prophet. Mal 3. 1,2, 3,6,7,8,10,

Therefore, Laſtly, A Word or two to his extraordinary Viſions (as he will have them) by which he overcame his former reluctancy, and was in ſome meaſure ſettled in the Belief of his being the *Elias*, *&c.* [p. 13, 14, 15, 16, *of his Diſp. concerning* Elijah.]

The particulars of his Viſions, which he mentions, are 1. A Globe of tranſparent Fire, about the bigneſs of the Moon at full; from whence proceeded the form of a Sword, and at the end thereof Flames of Fire. Afterwards a Dove vaniſhing out of his Sight. And laſtly, an univerſal and prodigious Comet, in the Year 168$\frac{8}{9}$.

As for the two former, that they might be the *Chimera*'s of a melancholly and overthoughtful Brain, is not very improbable, from the many inſtances which Authentick Hiſtory affords; and that only in reſpect to a deprav'd diſpoſition of the Blood and Spirits: but eſpecially what ſtrange deluſions may not Men run into, when confiding in their own ſtrength they Soar too high and tempt the Divine Protection to be withdrawn! But ſuppoſing them to be real, what ground can any Man, rightly poſſeſs'd of Reaſon, gather from thence for ſuch extraordinary Concluſions? Perhaps any one that hath

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read of Meteors and their Production might eaſily ſolve the Phœnomenon of the fiery Globe by natural cauſes, without running into ſuch preſumptuous and unaccountable ſpeculations. But that which ſeems to be of greateſt ſtreſs with *T. M.* is, That theſe particular Viſions happend to him at ſuch times as he was moſt wavering, and ſo beſet with clouds of Diffidence that he could not be ſatisfied without Miracles; and not only ſo, but the Dove was the very kind of Viſion which he had with a ſtrange curioſity imagin'd to himſelf, and as it were deſir'd for the confirmation of his Faith. Now, granting all this, what can be more reaſonable, than that Man wilfully leaving or perverting the ways of God, and the Rules preſcribed by him, ſhould be given up to the ſtrong Deluſions of Satan? And why may not the tiular God of this world, the Prince of the Power of the Air, be permitted to ſhew ſomething extraordinary for the promoting his own work in the World? Why may he not exert the utmoſt of his limited power near the period of his infernal Kingdom? Eſpecially ſince we are not only cautioned againſt his moſt plauſible Angelical Transformations, but aſſured that he will in the latter days do great things by his Emiſſaries confirmed with Signs and Wonders to deceive, if poſſible, the very Elect? So that theſe Miracles rather afford ground of Suſpicion than confirmation of *T. M*'s new Hypotheſis: And I would heartily wiſh him to conſider with all poſſible humility and ſerioufneſs, whether that heavy and repeated *Anathema* denounced by St. *Paul* againſt ſuch as ſhould dare to Preach any new Goſpel, may not extend to all thoſe that ſtrenuouſly endeavour to pervert the old: and whether we have not incurr'd thoſe dreadful Sanctions in the cloſe of *John*'s *Apocalypſe*, againſt adding to, or detracting from that abſtruce Philoſophy; ſince he hath been ſo bold to explode the Lake of Fire and ſecond Death, therein often mentioned.

Viz. Nitro-ſulphureous Particles of Air driven together by the exhal'd moiſture of the Earth, and then fir'd by the attraction of Calorifick Atoms.

2 Cor. 4. 4. Ephef. 2. 2.

2 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15. 2 Theſ. 2. 8, 9, 10. Mat. 24. 23, 24, 25.

1 Gal. 8. 9.

Rev. 22. 18, 19.

If he dare think me his Friend, and is yet capable of weighing things impartially, for I would charitably hope his Error is more ſeated in his Judgement than his Will, the beſt Advice I can give, is, inſtead of defending, ſpeedily to recede from theſe his imbib'd Notions, with ſuch Teſtimony of profound humility as we read of in the Caſe of *Job* (who doubtleſs, had far leſs need of it, tho' not altogether excuſable from an extream in ſelf-Juſtification) —— I will lay my Hand upon my Mouth: Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer, yea twice, but I will proceed no further: —— Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes ——. This ſeems the moſt probable, if not the only way to extricate himſelf from the Gall of bitterneſs —— and to find Mercy in the great day of Chriſt's appearance.

Job 40. 4, 5.

cap. 42. v. 6.

Acts 8. 23.

FINIS.